

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as shown below:

- 5 1. (Currently amended) A method for continuous alkali oxygen delignification of digested cellulose pulp and of cellulose pulp that has been washed after digestion, comprising:
10 storing which pulp is stored in a storage tower or pulp chute at essentially atmospheric pressure, maintaining the pulp at and that maintains a medium consistency in at the range of 8-16%, maintaining the cellulose pulp to be delignified at and that maintains a kappa value of at least 15 units, preferably a kappa exceeding 20, where the oxygen delignification takinges place in a reactor system with
15 several oxygen reactors with a predetermined retention time of the cellulose pulp in the reactor system, addingwhere alkali is added to the cellulose pulp in order to obtain an initial pH exceeding 9.0, adding and where oxygen is added to the cellulose pulp at an amount of 5-50 kg per tonne of pulp at a position before a first oxygen reactor in the reactor system, and providingwhere the pulp withhas a predetermined total retention time greater than 45 minutes in the reactor system, characterised in that, in association with anthe addition of the necessary chemicals
20 and an initial mixing-in operation for oxygen delignification, placing the cellulose pulp is placed under pressure in a high pressure section of the reactor system at an initial pressure of greater than 15.0 bar, after which the pulp passinges at least two reactor volumes with intermediate remixing positions, setting a where the final pressure after atthe final reactor volume is at least 13 bar at anthe end of the high pressure section, where atthe retention time t_1 is atthe retention time in a reactor volume before atthe first remixing position M_1 such that,

RF 128.1260USN 12-May-06

- 4 -

when ~~if~~ ~~the~~ number of ~~is~~ high-pressure reactors is X, the retention time is $t_1 - t_x$ for each reactor $R_1 - R_x$ such that $t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_x$.

- 5 2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ ~~wherein~~ the retention times $t_1 - t_x$ in the reactors $R_1 - R_x$ in the high pressure section are expressed as:

10 $t_{\min} = 1$ minute for t_1 , after which ($t_x=2 * t_{x-1}$) and $T_{\max}=X * 10$ minutes;

$(t_1=1-10 \text{ min.}, t_2=2-20 \text{ min.}; t_3=4-30 \text{ min.};$
 $t_4=8-40 \text{ min. etc.}),$
where $t_x < t_{x+1}$.

- 15 3. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 2, ~~characterised in that~~ ~~wherein~~ oxygen, preferably the major part of the oxygen added for the oxygen stage, is added to the cellulose pulp immediately after the initial pressure of more than 15.0 bar has been established.

- 20 4. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ ~~wherein~~ the pressure of the pulp is reduced after the high-pressure section to a pressure that lies under 10-12 bar, and the pulp is heated by steam such that the temperature of the pulp is raised by at least 5 °C by the addition of steam, followed by the heated pulp being led to a reactor system in a low pressure section with a retention time that exceeds the retention time in the high pressure section.

- 30 5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ ~~wherein~~ the remixing positions are constituted by fluidizing mixers, either in ~~the~~ form of a fluidizing pump, a fluidizing restriction, a fluidizing mixer or a restriction in ~~the~~ flow that results in a fall in pressure of less than 1 bar.

RF 128.1260USN 12-May-06

- 5 -

6. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that claim 1 wherein a stirrer is present in at least one high pressure reactor, which stirrer acts in the principal part (greater than 50%) of the reactor volume, either in ~~at~~ the form of a mechanical stirrer (S) or hydrodynamic stirrers that at least circulate free fluid in the reactor.
- 10 7. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that claim 1 wherein at least one of the oxygen and alkali additions are can be added to the cellulose pulp in association with the remixing positions in the high pressure section at an amount that is lower than the amount that is added at the initial mixing-in operation, and in that at least one of the oxygen and alkali additions are can be added batch-wise at ~~at~~ the beginning of the low pressure section.
- 15 8. (Currently amended) The method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that claim 1 wherein the cellulose pulp is dewatered before the oxygen delignification to a higher consistency and the cellulose pulpin that it is rediluted before the oxygen delignification to a medium consistency with pure filtrate that has preferably been previously oxidized, and in that alkali in ~~at~~ the form of oxidized white liquor is used in the oxygen delignification.